



TREE TRUNK

Zoar State Forest



This box contains lesson plans and supplies for field study on the Zoar State Forest. Teachers or group leaders may arrange to borrow the trunk by contacting the Va. Dept. of Forestry's King William office at 804-769-2962, or by emailing stateforest@dof.virginia.gov with "Zoar" in the subject line. Please review the lessons you intend to use online before your trip, as some activities may require students to bring extra clipboards or notebooks. (www.dof.virginia.gov/edu)

General Forest Information

Zoar State Forest is located in Aylett in King William County. When the British settled at Jamestown in 1607, there was a Powhatan Indian town, Passahunkack, in the area of Zoar State Forest. In the late 1600s, land near Herring Creek was set aside as a reservation. Some members of the Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe remain in the area today.

In the late 1700s, Robert Pollard acquired the land that is now Zoar State Forest and built his home there. At that time, the village of Aylett was a thriving commercial center with a racetrack, gambling and drinking, and Pollard thought of the town as a modern day Sodom and Gomorrah. He named his home place Mount Zoar, after the Biblical town spared upon the destruction of those two cities. The original house was completely destroyed by fire in 1890. The present house was completed in 1902, and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Pollard's descendants lived at Zoar until the 1960s. In 1988, Albert Stoddard donated the 378-acre property to the Commonwealth of Virginia, to be managed as a State Forest.

Zoar State Forest has a northern and a southern parcel, separated by private land holdings. The southern parcel contains managed hardwood and pine forest stands, agricultural fields and a pond, as well as the Mount Zoar house, outbuildings and cemetery. The northern section is in a mainly natural state and contains bottomland and upland hardwoods. Management activities demonstrate good forestry and conservation practices. Timber management is compatible with other forest uses, such as wildlife habitat, recreation and water quality protection. The Department of Forestry has planted some areas in longleaf pine, a species that once dominated eastern Virginia but is now uncommon. The river, pond, open fields and different timber types provide habitat for diverse wildlife species.

The State Forests of Virginia are self-supporting and receive no taxpayer funds for operations. Operating funds are generated from the sale of forest products, demonstrating the value of good forestry practices. Twenty-five percent of the revenue from the sale of forest products on the Zoar State Forest is returned to King William County.

Zoar State Forest is used for walking, wildlife watching and canoeing. The 2-mile Main Forest Trail is located on the southern parcel of the forest, with parking available at the Mount Zoar house.

Restrooms are available in the house when the forestry office is open. The 1.4 mile Mattaponi Bluffs Nature Trail and the 0.4 mile Herring Creek Loop Nature Trail are located on the northern parcel of the forest. A canoe launch is located on Herring Creek, which quickly joins the Mattaponi River approximately 4 miles upstream of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries boat ramp at Aylett. A common parking area on the northern property serves both trails and the canoe launch. Visitors are

asked to adopt a “leave no trace” ethic when visiting the forest, as there are no restrooms or trash receptacles outside the main office area.

Regulations

A complete listing of State Forest regulations may be found at www.dof.virginia.gov, but basic rules for Zoar State Forest are as follows:

- Park only in designated areas. Vehicles are not permitted on forest roads or trails.
- Pack out all trash.
- Do not remove any plant, animal or mineral.
- **Prohibited** activities and items on this forest include camping, ATVs, alcoholic beverages, fireworks, open air fires, and hunting.

Directions for Access:

Zoar State Forest is located at latitude N 37° 47' 14.8", longitude 77° 6' 34.4." (See map on the following page.) If you are bringing a group to the forest, please let the Va. Dept. of Forestry office know the date and approximate time of your visit. Call 804-769-2962, or email stateforest@dof.virginia.gov with “Zoar” in the subject line.












There are separate parking areas for the northern and southern portions of the forest. For the southern parcel (house and main trail), car parking is just inside the entrance gate at 4445 Upshaw Road (Route 608). School buses may park by the Forestry office (Mt. Zoar house), but please contact the office so someone will make sure to be on site. For the northern parcel (trails and canoe launch), use the designated parking area off W. River Road (Route 600).

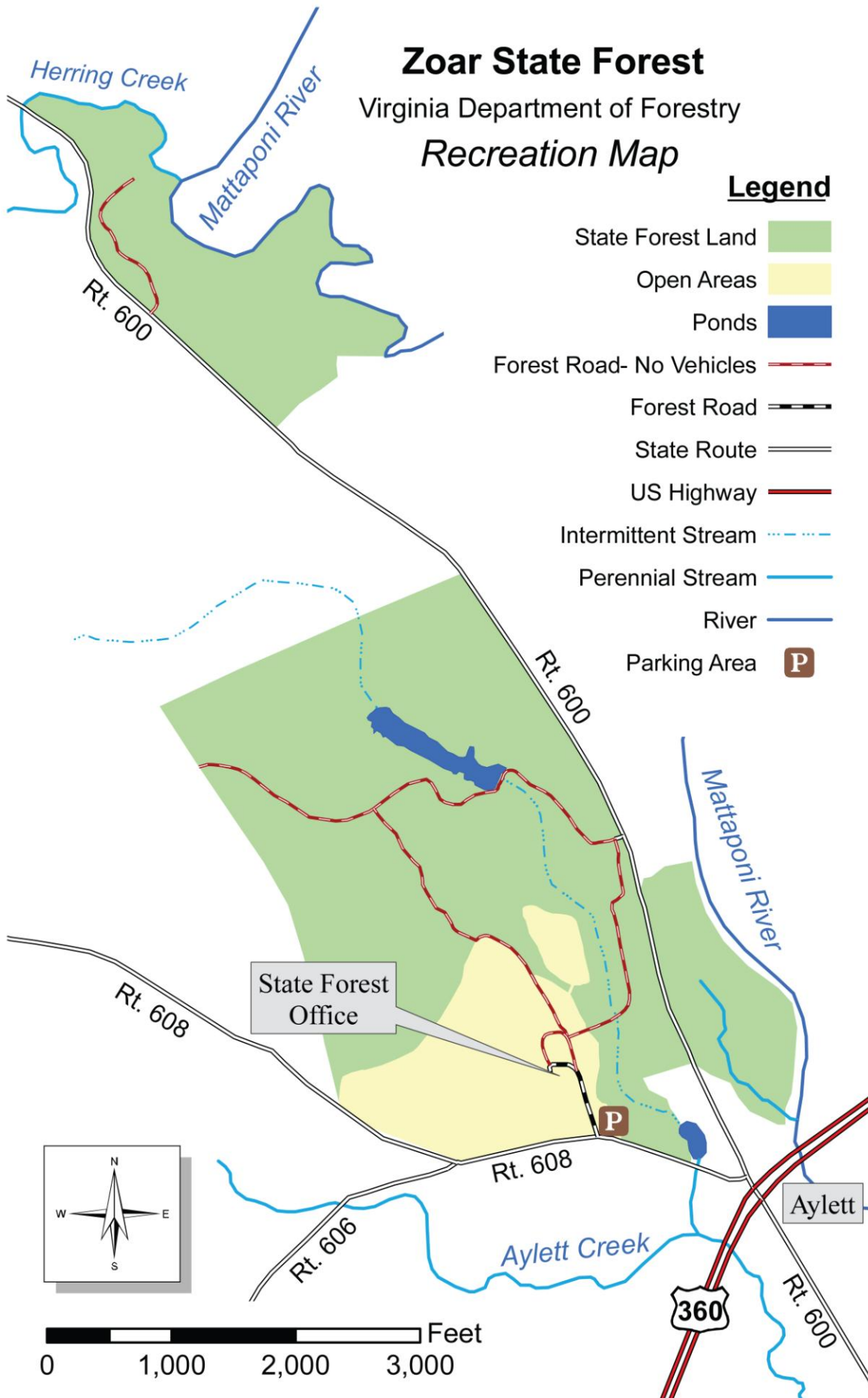
Zoar State Forest

Virginia Department of Forestry

Recreation Map

Legend

- State Forest Land 
- Open Areas 
- Ponds 
- Forest Road- No Vehicles 
- Forest Road 
- State Route 
- US Highway 
- Intermittent Stream 
- Perennial Stream 
- River 
- Parking Area 



Overview of Activities and Materials in the Tree Trunk

1) Forest Sense – grades K-12

Use the senses to gather information about the forest in this quiet writing (or drawing) activity.

-- *Clipboard, paper, and pencil for each student

2) ID That Tree – grades 4-12

Use a scientific key to identify common trees of the State Forest.

-- Single-page keys to common trees of the State Forest, for younger students.

-- Laminated photo cards of the trees in key, for younger students

-- Tree ID books for older students

3) A Tree for Me – grades K-5

Get closely acquainted with a single tree by making detailed observations.

-- *Clipboards, pencils, worksheets for grades 2-5 students /plain paper for K-1 students

-- Peeled crayons

4) Plots and Plans – grades 6-12

Collect biotic and abiotic data from a 1/10 acre forest plot, and make management recommendations for the State Forest.

-- 37.2 ft. yarn pieces (red), attached to stakes

-- Set of marker flags

-- Clipboards, pencils, data sheets

-- Flash ID guides

5) Measuring Up – grades 6-12

Use a Biltmore stick to determine tree height and diameter and calculate the amount of wood in a tree.

-- Biltmore sticks

-- 66-foot yarn pieces (orange)

-- Clipboards, pencils, paper

6) Could I Live Here? – grades 3-7

Learn about native wildlife and decide whether particular species could live on this site.

-- Laminated animal photos with info on back

-- Clothespins

7) Trees in Trouble (from PLT) – grades 3-8

Search a section of forest for signs of tree damage or poor health.

-- Clipboards, pencils, paper

-- Tree-ective Trouble Guide and Reading Leaf Symptoms pages

8) The Future Forest? - Grades 6-12, advanced (best for those proficient in tree ID)

Assess tree regeneration and make predictions about the future makeup of the forest.

-- 23 ft, 4.9 in. yarn pieces (yellow)

-- Data sheets, clipboards, pencils

-- Rulers

-- Tree ID books

Over →

9) Pests Gone Wild – Grades 6-12

Learn about invasive species threatening Virginia's forests, brainstorm solutions, and search for invasive plants.

-- Pests Gone Wild card set

-- Laminated invasive plant photos

*Additional clipboards will be needed for starred activities, as there are only 5 in the trunk.